

Application No. 10/736,656

Amendments to the Drawings:

The Drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include the following reference sign(s) mentioned in the description: 9, 18, 23 – 25, 29 A-D and 60 A-D. The Drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they include the following reference characters(s) not mentioned in the description: 18 A-D, 24 A-D and 25 A-D.

Reference numerals 9 and 23 have been removed from the text of the description. The A - D have been removed from reference numerals 29 and 60 in the text as well, although Applicant believes it is obvious for what the A-D stands for each reference number. Reference numerals 18, 24, and 25 in the text are all indicated as being plural reference numbers and correspond to 18A-D, 24A-D, and 25A-D. Applicants do not believe there is a need to explicitly write A-D next to each numeral as persons skilled in the art reading the application would understand the reference numbers as used. If the Examiner believes it to be necessary, Applicants can further amend the written description to recite A-D after these numerals throughout the application.

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Remarks

Applicant thanks the Examiner for his careful consideration of the application.
Claims 1 – 21 are pending in this application.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

Claims 1 – 5, 7, 12 – 14, 16, 17, 19, and 21 are rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by Jones et al. (US No. 6,530,655) ("Jones"). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

In claim 1, Applicant recites a solid ink melt assembly for use in a phase change printer. The melt assembly comprises a drip plate with first and second sides and a heater mounted to the first side of the plate and in direct contact with the plate without any insulating layer therebetween. A lower portion of the plate is shaped to form a drip point. The second side of the drip plate is directly exposed to ink sticks.

The Rejection to claim 1 should be withdrawn as the Examiner has not established that the prior art discloses all the elements of claim 1. Specifically, the Examiner has not established that Jones discloses a heater mounted to the first side of the plate and in direct contact with the plate without any insulating layer therebetween. The Examiner points to both drip plates 60 and melt plates 29 in Jones in his rejection. (Applicant interprets this to mean that melt plates 29 are being considered a heater for the present argument.) Column 6, lines 3 – 7 of Jones refer to an electrical insulation film on the backside of drip plate 60. Applicant has no such insulation between the heating mechanism 85 and drip plate 29. Applicant has amended claim 1 to more clearly recite this limitation. Therefore, Jones does not anticipate the present application.

Claim 5 should also be allowed regardless of whether claim 1 is allowed as claim 5 includes all the limitations of claim 1 and further recites that the heating element is a closed loop heater. The Examiner asserts that Figure 3 discloses closed loop heaters. However, the heating elements in Figure 3 are open loop heaters, not closed loop. The Examiner has

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not shown that the heating elements shown in Jones are closed loop heaters. Therefore, claim 5 should be allowable.

Claims 2 – 4, 7, 12, and 13 should be allowed if claim 1 is allowed as claims 2 – 5, 7, 12, and 13 depend from claim 1. Because the dependent claims should be allowable if the independent claims are allowed, Applicant has chosen not to argue the allowability of some or all of the dependent claims. However, some or all of the rejected dependent claims may be allowable regardless of the allowability of the independent claims.

In claim 14, Applicant recites an ink loader for use in a phase change ink printer. The ink loader includes at least one channel having an entry end and an exit end and a melt assembly, which includes a metallic drip plate with first and second sides and a heater mounted directly to the first side without any insulating layer therebetween. The lower portion of the plate is formed so as not to allow fluid to pass through from the second side to the first side.

The Rejection to claim 14 should be withdrawn as the Examiner has not established that the prior art discloses all the elements of claim 14. Specifically, the Examiner has not established that Jones discloses a heater mounted directly to the first side of the plate without any insulating layer therebetween. The Examiner points to both drip plates 60 and melt plates 29 in Jones in his rejection. (Applicant interprets this to mean that melt plates 29 are being considered a heater for the present argument.) Column 6, lines 3 – 7 of Jones refer to an electrical insulation film on the backside of drip plate 60. Applicant has no such insulation between the heating mechanism 85 and drip plate 29. Applicant has amended claim 14 to more clearly recite this limitation. Therefore, Jones does not anticipate the present application.

Claim 16 should also be allowed regardless of whether claim 14 is allowed as claim 16 includes all the limitations of claim 1 and further recites that the heating element is a closed loop heater. The Examiner asserts that Figure 3 discloses closed loop heaters. However, the heating elements in Figure 3 are open loop heaters, not closed loop. The Examiner has not shown that the heating elements shown in Jones are closed loop heaters. Therefore, claim 16 should be allowable.

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Claims 17 and 19 should be allowed if claim 14 is allowed as claims 17 and 19 depend from claim 14. Because the dependent claims should be allowable if the independent claims are allowed, Applicant has chosen not to argue the allowability of some or all of the dependent claims. However, some or all of the rejected dependent claims may be allowable regardless of the allowability of the independent claims.

In claim 21 Applicant recites a phase change ink printer that includes an ink loader for use in a phase change ink printer. The ink loader includes at least one channel having an entry end and an exit end and a melt assembly. The melt assembly includes a metallic drip plate with first and second sides, wherein the lower portion of the plate is shaped to form a drip point, and a heater mounted directly to the first side without any insulating layer therebetween. The drip plate is formed so as not to allow fluid to pass through from the second side to the first side.

The Rejection to claim 21 should be withdrawn as the Examiner has not established that the prior art discloses all the elements of claim 21. Specifically, the Examiner has not established that Jones discloses a heater mounted directly to the first side of the plate without any insulating layer therebetween. The Examiner points to both drip plates 60 and melt plates 29 in Jones in his rejection. (Applicant interprets this to mean that melt plates 29 are being considered a heater for the present argument.) Column 6, lines 3 – 7 of Jones refer to an electrical insulation film on the backside of drip plate 60. Applicant has no such insulation between the heating mechanism 85 and drip plate 29. Applicant has amended claim 21 to more clearly recite this limitation. Therefore, Jones does not anticipate the present application.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner objected to claims 6, 8 - 11, 15, 18, and 20 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicated they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant is

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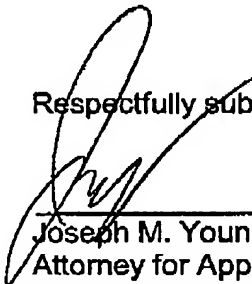
awaiting a final disposition on claims 1 and 14 before rewriting these claims in independent form.

Conclusion

No additional fee is believed to be required for this amendment. However, the undersigned Xerox Corporation attorney hereby authorizes the charging of any necessary fees, other than the issue fee, to Xerox Corporation Deposit Account No. 24-0025. This also constitutes a request for any needed extension of time and authorization to charge all fees therefor to Xerox Corporation Deposit Account No. 24-0025.

A telephone interview is respectfully requested at the number listed below prior to any further Office Action, i.e., if the Examiner has any remaining questions or issues to address after this paper. The undersigned will be happy to discuss any further Examiner-proposed amendments as may be appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,



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JMY/rjc